

The Tragedy of Hamlet

Ghost. Pity me not, but lend thy serious hearing
to what I shall unfold.

Ham. Speake I am bound to here,

Ghost. So art thou to reuenge, when thou shalt heare.

Ham. What?

Ghost. I am thy fathers spirit,
Doomd for a certaine tearme to walke the night,
And for the day confind to fast in fires,
Till the foule crimes done in my daies of nature
Are burnt and purg'd away: but that I am forbid
To tell the secrets of my prison-house,
I could a tale vnfolde whose lightest word
Would harrow vp thy soule, freeze thy young blood,
Make thy two eyes like stars start from their spheres,
Thy knotted and combined locks to part,
And each particular haire to stand an end,
Like quilts vpon the fearefull Porpentines:
But this eternall blazon must not be
To eares of flesh and blood, list, list, O list,
If thou didst euer thy deare father loue.

Ham. O God.

Ghost. Reuenge his foule, and most vnnaturall murder.

Ham. Murther.

Ghost. Murther most foule, as in the best it is,
But this most foule, strange and vnnaturall.

Ham. Hast me to know't, that I with wings as swift,
As meditation, or the thoughts of Loue
May sweepe to my reuenge.

Ghost I find thee apt,
And duller shouldest thou be then the fat weede
That rootes it selfe in ease on *Lethe* wharffe,
Wouldst thou not sturre in this; now *Hamlet* heare,
Tis giuen out, that sleeping in my Orchard,
A Serpent stung me, so the whole care of Denmarke
Is by a forged processe of my death
Ranckely abused: but know thou noble Youth,
The Serpent that did sting thy fathers life
Now weares his Crowne.

Ham. O my prophetike soule! my Vncle:

Ghost. I that incestuous, that adulterate beast,
With witchcraft of his wits, with trayterous gifts,
O wicked wit, and giftes that haue the power
So to seduce; wonne to his shamfull lust
The will of my most seeming vertuous *Queene*;
O *Hamlet*, what falling off was there
From me whose loue was of that dignity
That it went hand in hand, euen with the vow
I made to her in marriage, and to decline
Vpon a wretch whose naturall gifts were poore,
To those of mine; but vertue as it neuer will be mooued,
Though lewdnesse court it in a shape of heauen
So but though to a radiant Angle linckt.
Will sort it selfe in a celestiall bed
And pray on garbage.

But lo! me thinkes I scent the morning ayre,
Briefe let me be; sleeping within my Orchard,
My custome alwayes of the afternoone,
Vpon my secure houre, thy Vncle stole
With iuyce of cursed *Hebena* in a viall,
And in the porches of my eares did poure,
The leापrous distilment, whose effect
Holds such an enmity with blood of man,
That swift as quicksilver it courses through
The naturall gates and allies of the body,
And with a sodaine vigour it doth possesse
And curde like eager droppings into milke,
The thin and wholesome blood; so did it mine,
And a most instant tetter barked about
Most Lazerlike with vile and lothsome crust
All my smooth body:

Thus was I sleeping by a brothers hand,
Of life, of Crowne, of *Queene* at once dispatch,
Cut off euen in the blossomes of my sinne,
Vnnuzled, disappointed, vn-anueld,
No reckning made, but sent to my account
With all my imperfections on my head,
O horrible, O horrible, most horrible
If thou hast nature in thee beare it not,